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NEWS WORTH SHARING.

It's do-or-die for Whitecaps

Two losses have bumped the squad out of the playoff picture, but they'll be looking to jump back in this weekend PAGE 23

U.S. poised for strike on Syria

The White House makes its case for military action after an apparent chemical-weapons attack on civilians last week PAGE 8

FOUR-WHEELER'S SCENE-STEALER IN GETAWAY

ETHAN HAWKE, SELENA GOMEZ ARE NO MATCH FOR MUSCLE CAR PAGE 17

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A bra for you, and a bra for you ...

Robson and Burrard. Victoria's Secret debut attracts hundreds of women and girls

If you couldn't find your daughter, girlfriend or wife Tuesday, chances are she was waiting in line at the Victoria's Secret opening in Vancouver.

Hundreds of women and girls lined up as early as 5 a.m. to get first dibs on lingerie from the legendary underwear brand's 35,151-square-foot store at Robson and Burrard, officially the second-largest Victoria's Secret in the world.

"We want underwear!" said 16-year-old North Vancouver resident Sarah, first in line with three of her girlfriends. The teens were thrilled to have the store close to home and each planned to shell out around $150.

Brand loyalty was a popular theme among women braving the scattered showers, with Victoria resident Jessica Rourke, 32, extending her stay in the city for a chance to shop.

"It's good quality and the staff are trained to measure you properly.... Most women are clueless and wear the wrong bra," she said, adding she planned to spend about $300.

While these women felt the need to get there early, lines to get in — and to get a bonus pink umbrella for spending more than $75 — wrapped around the block throughout the afternoon and evening.

Many sizes were still available for tardy shoppers at the giant space decorated with plush cushions, busty mannequins and chandeliers.

And the retail frenzy isn't yet over — the hoopla will continue Thursday when Victoria's Secret angel Lindsay Ellingson comes to town for the official ribbon-cutting.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

One of the many shoppers who lined up to buy Victoria's Secret lingerie strolls out with her purchase at the store's opening in downtown Vancouver on Tuesday. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

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Foul play not confirmed

Police defend silence after first escort death

When New Westminster police found the body of 45-year-old Jill Lyons in her 11th Avenue apartment Aug. 12, they thought they were looking at a suicide.

It wasn't until 48-year-old Karen Nabors turned up dead in the same building on Sunday that they considered both women may have been victims of foul play, and warned those "engaging in a high-risk lifestyle" to remain vigilant.

Some sex-trade advocates said the warning came too late, and criticized the police for not doing more to protect escorts such as Lyons and Nabors.

But on Tuesday, Sgt. Jennifer Pound, Integrated Homicide Investigations Team spokesperson, defended the police's decision to remain silent after the first death.

Police don't typically publicize information about suspected suicides "in order to be empathetic and understanding to the sensitive issues that surround some of our cases," said Pound in a news release.

ELIZABETH HAMES/FOR METRO

Residential care facility

Family of slain B.C. senior don't blame suspect

Family members of an 85-year-old man who died after an attack at a facility for dementia patients in Vernon have expressed sympathy for the suspect and for staff members who dealt with the aftermath.

Bill May was a patient at Vernon Jubilee Hospital's residential care facility when he died after an incident Aug. 18. John Furman, a 95-year-old veteran of the Second World War, is facing a murder charge.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Possible strike action could threaten YVR's friendly skies ahead of a busy Labour Day weekend. ERIC DREGER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pickets or not, weekend travellers warned to anticipate turbulence

YVR. Airport strike may not cause delays, but typical long-weekend chaos likely in the cards

ELIZABETH HAMES
vancouver@metronews.ca

A 72-hour strike notice issued by a Vancouver International Airport (YVR) employees union Tuesday has travellers bracing for a chaotic weekend at one of Canada's busiest airports — but picketing workers may not be the culprits.

The union that issued the notice, Public Service Alliance of Canada/Union of Canada Transportation Employees local 20221, says job action could begin as early as Friday and would cause major delays at the airport. But the Vancouver Airport Authority disagrees.

"We don't anticipate any strike-related delays," said Anne Murray, vice-president of communications.

Of the 23,000 employees at YVR, only about 340 — maintenance workers, emergency response personnel and administrative support — are positioning to strike.

Moreover, a bare-bones crew of firefighters, electricians, mechanics, plumbers and air-field workers will stay on the job in the event of a strike, in accordance with an essential-services agreement reached between the union and the authority last week.

Talks between the authority and the union are scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday.

While Murray remains optimistic, Dave Clark, regional vice-president for Union of Canadian Transportation Employees, calls the authority's proposals a "slap in the face."

"What they're offering is a lot lower than (what) other airports that are not in the same financial position YVR is in are giving," he said.

The union's key bargaining issues include the option to work flexible hours and protection from contracting work out.

In either event, don't expect an easy jaunt down the breezeway leading up to Labour Day.

Long weekends are always busy for major transportation hubs like YVR, and Murray advised passengers to consult their airline or yvr.ca before their flight.

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More volunteers sign up.
Size of TransLink Compass test doubled

In response to a barrage of applications, TransLink will double the number of volunteers testing out its new Compass Cards this fall.

More than 15,000 eager Vancouverites put their name forward to be the first to try out the new fare-card system.

Of those, 10,000 customers from across the region, chosen based on how often they travel by transit, will take part in the beta test.

Beginning Sept. 9, the hoards of transit guinea pigs will use the Compass Cards to "tap in" at the beginning of their journey and "tap out" at the end, when the appropriate fare will be deducted from their account based on the distance they travelled.

To tap their Compass Cards, the volunteers will hold the card flat against special card readers installed on buses, the SeaBus, SkyTrains and the West Coast Express.

Users can reload their cards online, over the phone, at Compass vending machines or in person at select locations.

Information from the beta test will be relayed back to TransLink, allowing the transit authority to work out any kinks before the system-wide launch.

TransLink expects the system-wide transition to the Compass Cards will be complete by the summer of 2014.

ELIZABETH HAMES/FOR METRO

The B-line

Surrey to get new bus route

Surrey is getting a B-Line just in time for the back-to-school season.

The 96 B-Line will run every seven to eight minutes along King George Boulevard and 104 Avenue, connecting Newton and Guildford Exchanges via Surrey Central.

TransLink will also make another "major improvement" to transit in Surrey by finally extending the 335. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

2011 killing

Man shot dead by cop could have survived: Lawyer

A Williams Lake man who was shot to death by RCMP two years ago could have survived had he been transported to a hospital sooner, said a lawyer representing B.C.'s coroners service.

Rod MacKenzie said Tuesday that 23-year-old Justin Zinser bled to death in September 2011.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Record coal shipments at Port Metro Vancouver

At its peak. Coal, grain, potash and container shipments are all at the highest levels ever, port CEO says

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

Port Metro Vancouver as seen from Gastown on Tuesday. The port is "very pleased" with its results in a year when it's faced more scrutiny than ever regarding planned coal-export expansions. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Whether it's dealing with cruise ships or coal or containers, it's been smooth sailing for Vancouver's port at the halfway point of 2013 — at least when it comes to business.

"We're on track for a record year," Port Metro Vancouver's president and CEO Robin Silvester said after releasing the mid-year statistics on Tuesday.

Coal, grain, potash and container shipments are all at the highest levels ever, Silvester said, and cruise-ship numbers have bounced back above pre-recession numbers, with 813,000 passengers expected this year.

It shipped 18.2 million tonnes of coal, with thermal coal up 10 per cent to 5.7 million tonnes and steel-making coal up seven per cent to 12.4 million tonnes.

The port is "very pleased" with its results in a year when it's faced more scrutiny than ever regarding planned expansions of coal exports.

City councils around the region have expressed strong concerns about specific aspects of the Fraser Surrey Docks coal project (Surrey is concerned about health impacts and train traffic) and the consequences that coal exports have on climate change (Vancouver wants to ban coal, period).

"Those who oppose coal will undoubtedly be disappointed to see such strong volumes," Silvester said.

But the "quiet majority" support responsible trade and recognize how important resource exports are to B.C., he said.

The port focuses on handling materials safely and is discussing what a third-party health assessment should look like for the Fraser Surrey Docks project with local health authorities.

But UBC political science professor Kathryn Harrison, who also speaks for Voters Taking Action on Climate Change, questions the CEO's assessment that most British Columbians support coal exports.

Polls have suggested that people support the exports, but they were designed and conducted by the coal industry, Harrison said.

She also rejects the argument that the federal government is responsible for what is exported whereas the port must simply ensure it is transported safely.

"This is a line they've decided to stick with," she said, noting there isn't anything in their operating mandate that precludes them from looking at long-term health and environmental impacts.

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Transparency. Trudeau says folks are stoked that he openly spoke of toke

Justin Trudeau says he's received "almost universal" praise for admitting he smoked marijuana after becoming a member of Parliament.

And that certainly seemed to be the case Tuesday as the Liberal leader did a spot of mainstreeting in downtown Charlottetown.

Young and old seemed giddy at the prospect of meeting him. They sought his autograph or to have their picture taken; several spontaneously thanked him, as one middle-aged woman put it, "for telling the truth, Justin, no matter what."

"The conversations I've had with Canadians have almost universally been about people pleased with the level of openness and transparency that a Canadian politician is demonstrating," Trudeau said later.

Opponents have pounced on Trudeau's confession that he toked up at a dinner party three years ago. They accuse him of flouting the law and demonstrating that he's unfit to govern. THE CANADIAN PRESS

People in Charlottetown mobbed the Liberal leader.
NATHAN ROCHFORD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vox populi

"Hey Justin, wanna get baked?"

Tattooed, beer-toting and "happily unemployed" Jeff Moynagh to Trudeau, a "cool" guy he says he's likely to vote for.

Cronuts at the CNE

Poor refrigeration of bacon jam likely caused poisoning

An outbreak of food poisoning at the Canadian National Exhibition has been traced to the maple bacon jam topping on the cronut burger.

The likely cause of contamination was poor refrigeration, said Dr. Lisa Berger of Toronto Public Health.

"There were temperature-control issues both at the supplier and on site," she said. "The staphylococcus aureus toxin is not killed by cooking. Refrigeration prevents the bacteria from multiplying."

The investigation is now focused on Le Dolci, the jam's Toronto-based supplier. THE CANADIAN PRESS

'He was a mobster, but not a monster'

Al Capone in Sask.?

Great-niece of infamous gangster comes north for new documentary

ALYSSA MCDONALD
Metro in Regina

Feeding off swirling rumours and passed-down stories about Chicago gangster Al Capone's bootleg operation in the Canadian Prairies, a Saskatchewan documentary film crew is going deep — literally — to search for proof behind the prohibition tale.

The documentary, titled Finding Al, involves historical data and assorted tales surrounding the iconic mobster's rumoured appearances in and around Moose Jaw, Sask., in the 1920s.

"I've been to the Tunnels (of Moose Jaw) many times and I just wanted to investigate it," director and producer Kelly-Anne Riess told Metro in Moose Jaw — nicknamed Little Chicago by some — on Tuesday, referring to passageways below the city's downtown streets. The tunnels were turned into a tourist attraction in 2000 with Capone-themed tours and costumed characters.

Deirdre Capone, 73, centre, is filmed in the Tunnels of Moose Jaw for a documentary, Finding Al, about her great-uncle.
ALYSSA MCDONALD/METRO IN REGINA

Because of extremely limited paper documentation, Riess has focused on accounts passed down the generations.

Riess had planned to visit Capone's great-niece Deirdre, who has written a book about her family story. But the 73-year-old ended up coming to Saskatchewan from her Florida home to be featured in the documentary.

"There is no one else that can (tell the story)," Deirdre Capone said after taking a guided tour of the Tunnels.

"He was a mobster, but not a monster."

Capone didn't let on to her relation to the infamous crime figure during the tour, even whispering to a Metro reporter, "I wonder what these people would say if they knew who I was."

Riess pointed out that her favourite Saskatchewan story on Capone comes from a Weyburn-area home, where Deirdre's great-uncle would allegedly host firearm-filled parties once a year for his men and local farmers.

"I just like the idea of bootlegging mobster farmers," Riess said.

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Helping students make most of new opportunities

Scotiabanker Thomas Park shares his own experience to help international students at UBC make the most of every opportunity.

"Make the most of it, because you never know what's next," says Korean-born Thomas Park when advising international students at Scotiabank's UniverCity branch at the University of British Columbia (UBC). Still a student himself, the Vancouver customer service representative has plenty of advice, based on his family history and experience as a money-strapped student.

While Thomas is busy commuting between his business classes at Simon Fraser University and his Scotiabank® position, he recalls how at age 10 his family immigrated from South Korea. "I only knew the alphabet from A to T, since Thomas starts with T, but I quickly adapted to Canada's school system."

He later appreciated how his father struggled to support the family without work for a year. "Without much English, he went through hardships to find us a place to live, and go to school," recounts Thomas, noting that his dad couldn't resume his previous banking career for lack of language skills.

Sharing his father's determination, university-bound Thomas enrolled in the Canadian Armed Forces reserves to pay tuition, although he harboured a desire to become a financial advisor. His interest in banking increased when he opened a student account at Scotiabank. Notes Thomas, "I saw how it's important to choose an account with the right benefits for you, such as no monthly fee and even reward points for free movies."

As a satisfied Scotiabank customer, Thomas jumped at the chance to work at the UBC branch last fall. "I know what students are going through and I tell them that although they are busy studying, they must understand their finances," explains Thomas, whose happy customers come back with friends who also seek patient, friendly advice.

He takes this same approach with UBC's international students who are often unfamiliar with the Canadian banking system: "I help them understand service fees, the difference between chequing and savings accounts, and how to receive wire transfers from home and earn higher interest on their funds."

Thomas gladly outlines the advantages of the ***Scotiabank StartRight***® Program[1] which includes a free day-to-day bank account for one year[2], a wide range of credit card options[3] and a number of other customized services and benefits.

"I remind them that they may be a student now, but they should build a good credit history so that they can obtain a loan or mortgage in the future. You never know what's down the road."

"Students should find the right advisor," says Thomas. "Instead of just going to any bank, find an advisor who understands your situation, explains everything, and shows what else the bank can do for you." With his memories as a newcomer and his knowledge of campus life, Thomas is ready to help international students make the most of each new opportunity in Canada.

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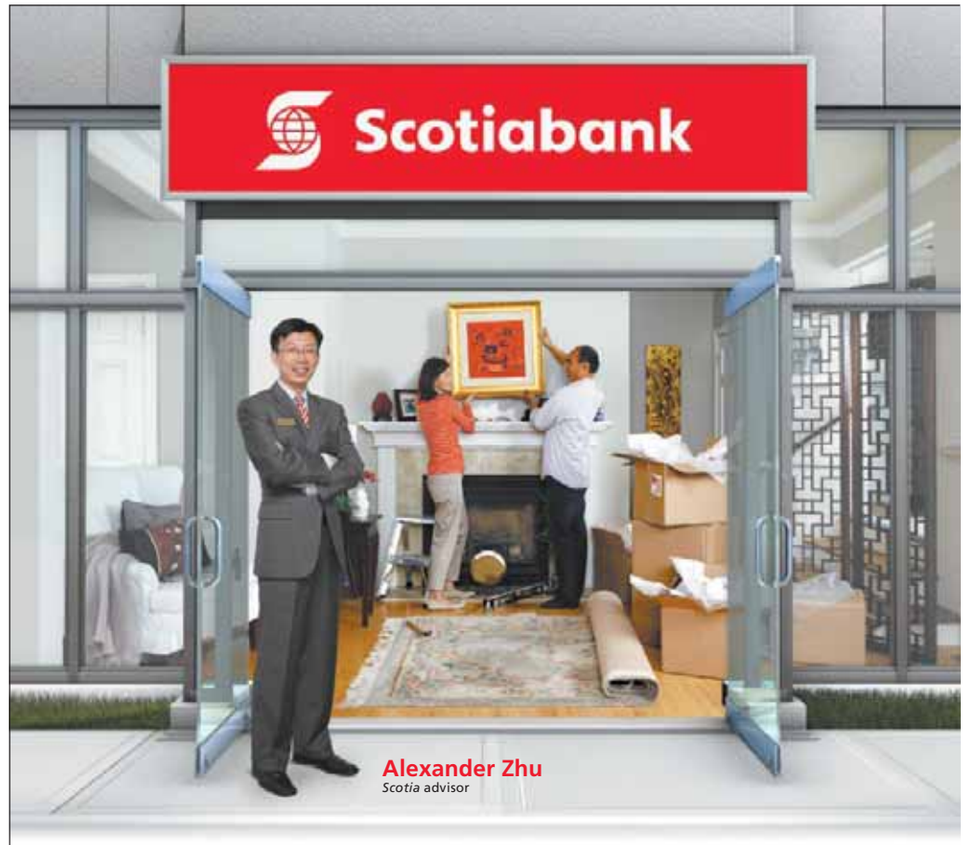

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No plan to recall Parliament. Baird talks Syria with opposition

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird is talking to opposition leaders about the developing crisis surrounding Syria. But the department says calls to recall Parliament to discuss military action are premature.

Baird spoke first to Tom Mulcair, whose spokesman, George Smith, said the NDP Leader "was very clear with Minister Baird that Parliament would have to be recalled if there was any direct military involvement. Mr. Mulcair also stressed the importance of working with the United Nations."

Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau said Canada needs to proceed cautiously. "As soon as we talk about military intervention, there are many, many questions unanswered. Like what would military victory look like? Who would we be helping?" Trudeau said.

"There are grave questions, both about the government side but also about the rebel side. That's where we have to have honest and open dialogue about it. And I'm certainly not going to pretend that anyone has all the answers."

John Baird THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Division in the ranks. UN mandate needed for action against Syria, Italy says

Any military strike against Syria must be authorized by the UN Security Council, Italy insisted on Tuesday.

Briefing Parliament, Foreign Minister Emma Bonino called Syria's alleged chemical attack a "war crime" but said her government wouldn't support military action without UN Security Council authorization.

"Italy would not actively take in any military action ... beyond the context of the Security Council, which for us is and remains the only point of legal reference that cannot be ignored," Bonino said.

Italy offered both military bases on its territory and its own aircraft for the 2011 NATO campaign in Libya. Bonino didn't specify how Italy might view base use during any intervention against Syria led by allies. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. lays out case for Syrian strike

Closer to attack.
Officials prepare legal justification for military intervention

The Obama administration tried to bolster its case on Tuesday for military action against Syria within days, with intelligence agencies preparing to release intercepted communications aimed at proving Bashar Assad perpetrated a large-scale chemical attack on civilians.

The U.S. was unlikely to act before Thursday, when British Prime Minister David Cameron will convene an emergency meeting of Parliament during which MPs are expected to vote on a motion clearing the way for an armed response.

President Barack Obama and Cameron conferred on response plans on Tuesday, their second known conversation.

U.S. officials argued that Assad's actions posed a direct threat to national security, providing Obama with a possible legal justification for launching a strike without consent from the United Nations or Congress. However, officials did not detail how the U.S. was directly threatened by an attack contained within Syria's borders.

"Allowing the use of chemical weapons on a significant scale to take place without a response would present a significant challenge to, threat to the United States' national security," White House spokesman Jay Carney said.

Officials said the goal was not to drive Assad from power or impact the broader trajectory of Syria's bloody civil war. "The options we are considering are not about regime change," Carney said.

Assad has denied using chemical weapons.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

At a news conference in Damascus on Tuesday, Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem said his country would use "all means available" to repel a U.S.-led strike on Syria. "We have the means to defend ourselves and we will surprise everyone," he said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gearing up for conflict

'We are ready to go'

Military forces are poised to strike Syria immediately if the commander-in-chief gives the order, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said on Tuesday.

"We are ready to go," Hagel said during a television interview while travelling in Asia.

The Navy has four destroyers in the eastern Mediterranean within range of targets inside Syria and also has warplanes in the region.

Before any strike, the U.S. also plans to release intelligence it says will directly link Assad to the Aug. 21 attack in the Damascus suburbs.

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Possible bid. Washington sets sights on 2024 Games, claims to be 'safest city'

Washington is making a push to host the 2024 Olympics.

DC 2024 president Bob Sweeney announced Tuesday the formation of a non-profit group aimed at making Washington the first American city to host the Summer Games since Atlanta in 1996, and the first to host an Olympics since the Winter Games were held in Salt Lake City in 2002.

"We are the safest and most secure city in the world," Sweeney said. "The largest expense of any Olympic Games is security, and the fact that we've got it pretty built in to our everyday life here in Washington, we would leverage that asset tremendously to put on this high-profile event."

The bid has a long way to go. Washington was one of 35 U.S. cities to receive a letter from the U.S. Olympic Committee to gauge interest, and Sweeney expects about 10 to step forward as serious candidates. The USOC hasn't even decided for certain that it wants to bid for the 2024 Games, which will be awarded by the International Olympic Committee in 2017.

"They need to make sure there is a strong horse to ride," Sweeney said. "And we certainly intend to be that."

Los Angeles, which hosted the 1932 and 1984 Olympics, Philadelphia and Tulsa, Oklahoma, have announced their interest. San Diego wants to host a cross-border Olympics with Mexican neighbour Tijuana. Other potential 2024 contenders from around the world include Paris; Rome; Doha, Qatar; and a city in South Africa.

Washington made a push for the 2012 Games a decade ago and was thought to be the favourite to be the U.S. representative, but the USOC chose New York instead.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Friends visit the Lincoln Memorial in Washington last weekend. The city is making a push to host the 2024 Olympics, with a rep reasoning that the capital is "the safest and most secure city in the world." MARK WILSON/GETTY IMAGES

Reflecting on 'I Have a Dream' 50 years later

1963 speech. Barack Obama acknowledges work of Martin Luther King Jr. and others in pushing forward racial equality in the U.S.

Barack Obama was two years old and growing up in Hawaii when Martin Luther King Jr., the American civil rights leader, delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington.

Fifty years later, the nation's first black president will stand as the most high-profile example of the racial progress King espoused, delivering remarks Wednesday at a nationwide commemoration of the 1963 demonstration for jobs, economic justice and racial equality.

Obama believes his success in attaining the nation's highest political office is a testament to the dedication of King and others, and that he would not be the current White House occupant if it were not for their willingness to persevere through repeated imprisonments, bomb threats and blasts from billy clubs and fire hoses.

In tribute, Obama keeps a bust of King in the Oval Office and a framed copy of the program from that historic day when 250,000 people gathered for the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

Within five years, the man Obama would later identify as one of his idols was dead, assassinated in April 1968 outside of a hotel room in Memphis, Tenn.

But King's dream didn't die with him. Many believe it came true in 2008 when Obama became the first black man Americans ever elected as their president.

The "Let Freedom Ring" commemoration is scheduled to run from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Bell-ringing commemorations are also planned across the U.S.

For Obama, the march is a "seminal event" and part of his generation's "formative memory." A half century after the march, he said, is a good time to reflect on how far the country has come and how far it still has to go, particularly after the Trayvon Martin shooting trial in Florida.

A jury's decision to acquit neighbourhood watchman George Zimmerman in the 2012 fatal shooting of the unarmed, 17-year-old black teen outraged blacks across the country last month and reignited a nationwide discussion about the state of U.S. race relations.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Among those expected to appear Wednesday at the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington are, clockwise from top: Oprah Winfrey and actor Forest Whitaker; singer LeAnn Rimes; former President Bill Clinton; Caroline Kennedy, the daughter of president John F. Kennedy; and actor Jamie Foxx. GETTY IMAGES AND THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Ottawa appeases critics of U.S. tobacco proposal

TransPacific Partnership. Advocates say companies would win the ability to challenge countries

A U.S. proposal would call for country-to-country consultations by public health officials before any challenge is launched. CAMERON SPENCER/GETTY IMAGES

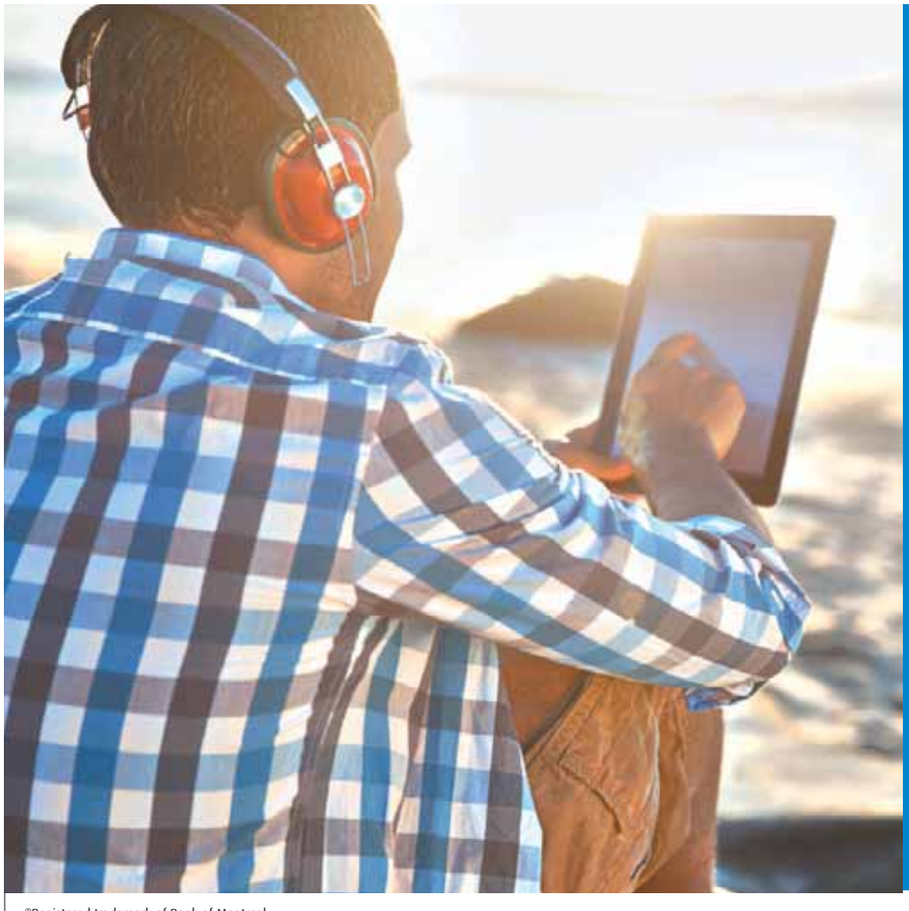
The Canadian government says it sees no specific threat in a controversial U.S. proposal to include tobacco in the TransPacific Partnership trade negotiations that health advocates argue will make it more difficult to enforce anti-smoking campaigns.

A spokesman for Trade Minister Ed Fast says the government is still reviewing the proposal, along with another tabled Tuesday that would carve out tobacco from the TPP altogether, but said it does not believe there will be any impact on Canada's anti-smoking regulations.

"Canada's ability to regulate in the public interest, including health, remains unchanged in the U.S. proposal," said Rudy Husny, press secretary to the trade minister.

Other officials say the U.S. proposal does not give tobacco companies any more rights to sue countries than currently exist.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Feds requested data on 219 Facebook users

Online privacy. Firm is latest tech company to release stats on how often governments seek customer information

The Canadian government demanded Facebook turn over information on 219 users in the first half of the year, the company said Tuesday in releasing global data.

They were among about 38,000 Facebook users whose data was scrutinized by authorities in 74 countries, Facebook said. About half of those orders came from the United States.

Facebook said it turned over some data to authorities in 44 per cent of the Canadian cases, and that it was required by law to do so. The company declined to give any specific details.

The social-networking giant is the latest technology firm to release figures on how often governments seek information about customers. Microsoft and Google have done the same.

"The vast majority of these requests relate to criminal cases, such as robberies or kidnappings," Facebook said on its blog. "In many of these cases, these government requests seek basic subscriber information, such as name and length of service. Other requests may also seek IP address logs or actual account content."

Facebook and other technology companies have been criticized for helping the National Security Agency secretly collect data on customers. U.S. federal law gives the government the authority to demand data without specific warrants, and while companies can fight requests in secret court hearings, it's an uphill battle.

It's not clear from the Facebook data how many of the government requests on 38,000 users were for law-enforcement purposes and how many were for intelligence gathering.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Talking Turkey

- Facebook and Twitter have become organizing platforms for activists and, as such, are targets for authorities.
- During anti-government protests in Turkey in May and June, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan called social media "the worst menace to society." At the time, Facebook denied it provided information about protest organizers to the Turkish government.
- Data released Tuesday show Turkish authorities submitted 96 requests covering 173 users. Facebook said it provided some data in about 45 of those cases, but there is no information on what was turned over and why.

Halifax

N.S. licence plates boost buying local

A new licence plate is being made available in Nova Scotia that encourages people to buy locally produced goods. The plate features an image from the Select Nova Scotia marketing campaign. The optional plate will be issued on request to passenger and light commercial vehicles.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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CAN AFFLECK BE THE WORST BATMAN?

JUST SAYIN'

Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

Are you ready to have some fun?

Are you ready to play the Batman game?

Granted, this is probably only fun for people who have yet to get beyond the mental age of 12, but that's almost everybody. The rest of you, get over yourselves.

The Batman game is easy to play, of course: In the history of Batman stretching back to 1943, who has been the best — and the worst — Batman?

It's time to play the game again, because now that The Dark Knight's Christian Bale has moved on to Shakespeare or whatever, Ben Affleck has been announced as his replacement, causing thousands of bat fans to fall screeching from the sky.

Even though Ben has restored his reputation with an Oscar for Argo, the stench from the "Bennifer" era and his participation in Gigli, often cited as the worst movie ever, lingers.

There's even a petition on the White House website demanding that the president intervene and prevent 'Batfleck' from spoiling Batman.

Many fans believe Bale redeemed Batman from weak portrayals by otherwise decent actors such as George Clooney and indecent actors such as Val Kilmer, and they don't want to see another lame flying mammal re-infest the bat cave.

OK, if Clooney, the world's most admired movie star, failed to own the belfry, what does Batfleck expect? It's a dangerous job, fighting crime in Gotham City for $15 million an episode.

When you play the game, you probably start during the era when you first encountered the Caped Crusader. For me, that would be back in the '60s, and the inane Batman TV series of 1966-68 starring Adam West. Of course, it was supposed to be inane, or "camp," I believe it was called then, when inane was cool.

I never bought that.

Then, in the late '80s, Tim Burton made Beetlejuice star Michael Keaton his Batman, generating the same kind of horror now gripping the streets of Gotham and other locales over Batfleck. But Keaton turned out to be really good; so good, he rivals Bale as a fan favourite, especially for those who were alive in the '80s.

For the most part, people seem to prefer the intense, brooding Batguys to the Bat-light Clooneys or Kilmers.

Even Clooney himself thinks he stunk up the cave: "With hindsight," he said "it's easy to look back at this and go 'Woah, that was really s--t and I was really bad in it.'"

Of course, if you're really serious about this stuff, you can spread your wings and get into a variation on a theme: the Batman nemesis game. For example, who's the best Penguin, Burgess Meredith or Danny DeVito? Or how about the best Joker? Jack Nicholson or Heath Ledger?

If we can keep this going, we'll never have to grow up. Batman forever!

ZOOM

It takes balls to beat boredom

THOMAS HARTWELL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fun after curfew? Don't count on it

Egyptians break curfew by playing soccer during the nighttime in the Garden City neighbourhood of Cairo.

In every corner of the Egyptian capital, a bustling city of 18 million that rarely sleeps, people are locked up in their homes at night under a military-imposed curfew that has driven people up the walls, sometimes literally.

To kill time, one said he spent the night counting flowers on his wallpaper — a staggering 865. Another tested how many cucumbers he can fit in a refrigerator drawer. A third calculated the speed of an ant crawling on his balcony rail.

The curfew has been a shock to Cairo, a city where cafes stay packed into the night and parents routinely take their children out for dinners nearing midnight.

The military-backed government's curfew, after violent unrest following the July 3 coup that ousted President Mohammed Morsi, slashed the typical Cairo 24-hour life to just 11 hours. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

What to do...

- Some predicted a baby boom next winter. Cynics suggest a hike in divorce rates —spouses are locked up together for longer.
- Others fled the turmoil to the Mediterranean coastline.

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

Somebody needs to have the comedic chops to help us fill the time between cat videos. Luckily for us, YouTube is home to a bumper crop of very funny people who are happy to oblige.

BriTANick:

Nick Kocher and Brian McElhaney enjoyed a moment in the spotlight with Oscar-Winning Movie Trailer a while back, but their channel is an embarrassment of riches for anybody looking for a laugh. A gold star award for the skit where the two argue over whether or not Jesus can be seen in a piece of toast. (youtube.com/britanick)

5 Second Films:

A simple enough concept: Unpack as much humour and plot that five seconds will allow. The brevity means you're often thrown into dysfunctional relationships between roommates, but who can't relate to that. (youtube.com/5secondfilms)

Comediva:

Hilarious recurring characters and weird high-concept ideas for television shows are among the many reasons this channel works as a perfect rebuttal the next time you run into somebody from the cult of Women Aren't Funny. (youtube.com/comediva)

Letters

RE: Talking About Sex? Gasp! Published Aug. 21

I thought it was a really interesting and apt point made by the author that children and teens are exposed, without question, to huge amounts of violence, and yet are sheltered from any open, honest, and fact- or experience-based discussion of sex and sexuality.

Due to the inadequacy of sex education in schools, and many parents' squeamishness about discussing the topic, teens are left to educate themselves and each other about sex — getting their (mis)information from urban myths, chat rooms, and reality television. Talking to one's child about sex can be difficult, so parents should be glad there is this type of self-guided, science-based exhibition to help teach their children/teens about healthy sexuality.

The "self-appointed guardians of the public morality" are kidding themselves by thinking that this exhibit (or any open discussions about sex) will newly expose teens to "the discovery of attraction, seduction, desire, and intimacy."

So what is it about sex? Unfortunately, our society still operates on a puritanical value system, that not only turns a blind eye to the realities of youth and sex, but which also paints sex and sexuality as something that is shameful and should not be spoken about.

Martha Elliott and Karla Pena-Mendez, London, Ont.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU: Send us your comments: vancouverletters@metronews.ca

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A curious idea and its interesting conversation

Ironside. Actor responds to criticism over being cast as detective in a wheelchair

When it came time to prepare for his role as the wheelchair-bound detective in Global's reboot of the television classic Ironside, Blair Underwood turned to his mother for advice.

"I spent a lot of time talking to her about her experiences," Underwood said about his mother, who has multiple sclerosis and uses a wheelchair.

"It was very important that we as professionals … me as an actor, are really respectful and authentic as we can be to this disability that this character has."

The fact Underwood's character uses a wheelchair is about as far as this reboot of the TV classic goes in trying to emulate Raymond Burr's show, which aired from 1967 to 1975.

"It was a very curious idea; I was a little taken aback," admitted Underwood about being asked to join the cast.

"But then I thought, I liked the old Ironside. The only elements we took are his name, Ironside, the fact that he is a detective, the fact he is in a wheelchair."

Blair Underwood stars in the reboot of the TV classic Ironside. CONTRIBUTED

Airing Wednesdays starting Oct. 2, the series picks up two years after Underwood's character, Robert Ironside, is paralyzed by a gun shot while investigating a case.

"He is very much trying to reconcile this new version of himself," Underwood says of his character, whose story is told in flashbacks throughout the series.

Still, Underwood's casting in the series hasn't been without controversy.

Some have criticized the casting as offensive because, instead of hiring an actor who uses a wheelchair, they went with an able-bodied actor instead.

"I think it is great that it has brought the conversation forward," said Underwood. "It's a conversation that I get, I respect it, and what I derive from that, from speaking to one particular actor who is disabled, is their frustration. Because actors who are disabled, from what I understand, are often not thought of in terms of casting. Producers don't think to cast a disabled actor."

METRO

All about the dialogue

"I think it is great that it has brought the conversation forward."

Blair Underwood on facing criticism for being an able-bodied actor cast in the role of a detective in a wheelchair

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If you are an official Health Canada licensed medicinal marijuana patient, we would like you to join a small group of other Health Canada licensed medicinal marijuana patients to help us gain insight and feedback in order to effectively service this segment of the market.

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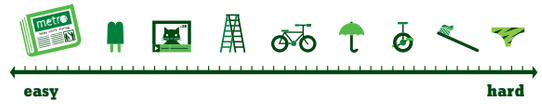

James Spader is a notorious criminal in The Blacklist. CONTRIBUTED

Spader's no Whitey Bulger, and that's OK

Blacklist. New series may resemble real life and movies, but there's plenty that's original

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

In his new series, The Blacklist, James Spader may play a notorious criminal who has long been one of the FBI's most wanted and on the lam for years, but he really wishes people would stop comparing the character to recently convicted gangster Whitey Bulger.

"I want to put that to rest right now," Spader insists. "What was inspired by Whitey Bulger was just the fact that Whitey Bulger was on the FBI Most Wanted List for decades — I don't know how long, but 16 or 17 years; an enormous amount of time. Nobody knew where he was; nobody knew what he was up to, and then all of a sudden, boom, he's found. That was the only correlation."

Spader seems especially keen to clarify that his character in The Blacklist, the enigmatic Raymond Reddington, and a criminal like Bulger are very, very different.

"Whitey Bulger and Raymond Reddington do not relate to each other in any way, shape or form," he says.

"Whitey Bulger, as we all know from the front page of the New York Times every day, was a very powerful crime figure in South Boston. Raymond Reddington's background is very different. He worked in military intelligence, then worked for the NSA and then became a truly international criminal. So the correlation really stops after just the fact that somebody that was on the Most Wanted list for so many years and was invisible all of a sudden resurfaces."

And while we're discouraging comparisons, Spader would also appreciate it if viewers wouldn't draw links to Silence of the Lambs, even if the first episode of The Blacklist finds Spader's Reddington meeting FBI agent Elizabeth Keen (Megan Boone) in a similar fashion.

"Listen, there's no question that you see anybody who's in that containment that you see Raymond Reddington in at the very beginning — very dramatic and stylized containment — it brings up images that you've experienced in pop culture in the past," he says.

"So obviously the correlation seems right there, but Reddington's a very different person. He's not a serial killer in any way, shape or form. He's an operative and a businessman, and his business is crime."

Watch it

- The Blacklist airs Monday on Global starting Sept. 23

Lucky 7

Stabbing people can get so tiring

Luis Antonio Ramos, starring in the new City series Lucky 7, became emotional talking about the chance to play something other than a stereotypical Latino character.

"I was tired of playing bad guys and stabbing people in the neck," Ramos said during a recent panel discussion with the media.

In Lucky 7, Ramos' character works at a gas station in Queens, N.Y., and is a devoted family man. The series follows the impact that a shared lottery win has on the station's employees.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Luis Antonio Ramos. CONTRIBUTED

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Muscle car is the real star of Getaway

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

Ethan Hawke and Selena Gomez are the stars of Getaway, a new action adventure film from Toronto-born director Courtney Solomon, but the scene-stealer is the Ford Shelby GT500 Super Snake, built by legendary car customizer Shelby American.

"Since Getaway takes place in a foreign country," said Soloman, "I felt strongly that we needed the quintessential American muscle car with enough star power to shine with Ethan and Selena."

Two Shelby GT500 Super Snakes were actually used to tell the story of a former race car driver who must steal the souped-up car and perform a number of duties to prevent his wife from being killed. The first can be seen in the Bulgarian-shot action scenes. The second was used during audio recording in Los Angeles.

The silver Super Snake is a sleek thing of beauty, but the most famous movie car has to be the 1963 Aston Martin DB5 used in Goldfinger. Not only was it the first and most recognized James Bond car — after the movie was released it was called "the most famous car in the world" — but it also inspired a popular Corgi car that became the biggest selling toy of 1964.

The British-made vehicle also appears in The Cannonball Run, driven by former Bond Roger Moore and in a highly stylized form as a secret agent (voiced by Michael Caine) in Pixar's Cars 2.

The first auto to have its own screen credit was Herbie, the anthropomorphic 1962 Volkswagen Beetle from The Love Bug. The original script didn't specify any type of car, but after filmmakers "auditioned" several Toyotas, a TVR sportscar, a Volvo, an MG and a pearl white Volkswagen Beetle, the VW was chosen because it was the only car the crew tried to reach out and pet.

Ethan Hawke and Selena Gomez in Getaway. CONTRIBUTED

Finally, who could forget Marty McFly's (Michael J. Fox) famous line, "Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Doc, uh... Are you telling me that you built a time machine... out of a DeLorean?"

Back to the Future used one of the 9,000 gull-winged DeLorean DMC-12 sport cars manufactured by the DeLorean Motor Company in Northern Ireland as a machine that propelled McFly back in time.

"Yes, the way I see it," said the machine's inventor, Dr. Emmett L. Brown (Christopher Lloyd), "if you're gonna build a time machine into a car, why not do it with some style?"

Crime/drama

Closed Circuit

Director. John Crowley

Stars. Eric Bana, Rebecca Hall, Jim Broadbent

Eric Bana and Rebecca Hall play lawyers and ex-lovers who find themselves in the crosshairs when their defence of a suspected terrorist uncovers evidence that could cause a national scandal. Closed Circuit is a thriller with few thrills. In its rush to get to the climax — which is actually twisty and turny enough to be interesting — it blasts through plot details, not giving us any reason to care about the characters. Once again Bana proves to be a handsome cipher — he's a good-looking actor but as dull as dishwater.

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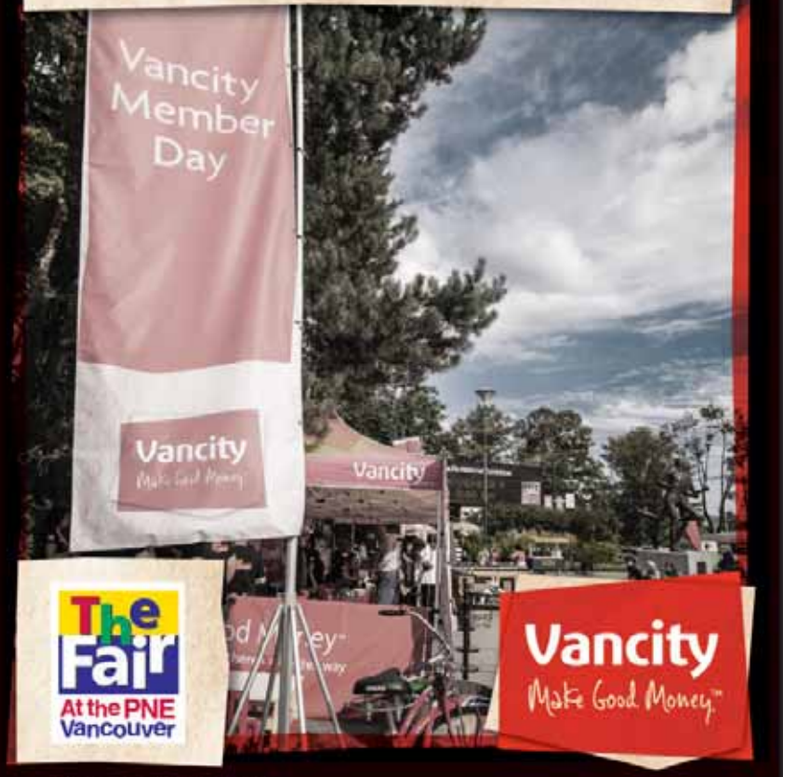

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Are Rihanna and Drake rekindling?

It looks like Rihanna is spending time with old flame Drake, as the pair got in some quality time at N.Y. nightspot Sons of Essex the Friday prior to last weekend's MTV Video Music Awards, according to E! News.

"Drake came in around 10 p.m. with 10 people and had four large security guards. Rihanna came about an hour later, alone, not counting her security," a source says. "They sat in a back room, the lights were dimmed and there was sort of a barricade of tables blocking their group off."

But don't call it a re-kindled romance just yet. "It seemed very casual," the source says, adding that Rihanna and Drake left a "generous" $500 tip before leaving separately.

METRO WORLD NEWS

YOU COULD **WIN**

4 TICKETS TO THE WIGGLES SHOW

No purchase necessary. Contest open to legal residents of Vancouver who have reached the age of eighteen (18) years or older. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. 2 prizes to be won, each consisting of 4 tickets to see the Wiggles at the Queen Elizabeth Theater in Vancouver on Tuesday, September 3, 2013 (valued at approx. $80). Contest closes August 28th, 2013 at 11:59pm. To enter and for complete contest rules, visit www.clubmetro.com

VISIT clubmetro.com TO ENTER

If celebrity spotting and star gazing gets your adrenaline pumping, here are some holiday suggestions that will allow you to indulge your inner paparazzi

ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie
life@metronews.ca

Travel like a star

1 Be a high roller

For those who want to spend the money to rub shoulders with the world's rich and famous, a great website to bookmark is millionairesconcierge.com. It can help you plan a whole range of high-end vacations and buy tickets to celebrity-heavy events, like the Oscars, the Superbowl or the Emmys. ACTRESS JENNIFER LAWRENCE ARRIVES AT THE OSCARS/GETTY IMAGES

2 Or save your pennies

For the slightly more budget conscious, go to the tinsel towns of New York, Los Angeles or London, England. Reserve tickets in advance to the taping of your favourite late night talk show or TV sitcom to ensure some celeb face time. BE PART OF A STUDIO AUDIENCE!/GETTY IMAGES

3 Celeb hot spots

If you prefer to actually vacation alongside the stars, book your holiday to celebrity favourites like Las Vegas, Telluride, Colorado or the Caribbean islands of St. Bart's or Anguilla. Anguilla's laid back vibe is particularly attractive to celebrities like Ellen and Portia, Jay-Z and Beyoncé and camera-shy Janet Jackson, who was seen wandering around the supermarket alone. ST. BART'S HARBOUR/ISTOCK IMAGES

4 TIFF brings Hollywood north

This year's Toronto International Film Festival runs from Sept. 5 to the 15 and will provide opportunities to see stars such as Meryl Streep, Hugh Jackman and Jennifer Aniston. Film festivals are a great way to include star gazing into your vacation. Celebs are there to promote their movies and mingle, so they tend to be more open to the attention. Stake out the red carpets and lie in wait over cocktails at hip locations like the Drake Hotel, the Shangri-La or the recently opened Four Seasons Hotel. ACTOR JARED LETO AT TIFF IN 2012/GETTY IMAGES

5 Stay in their resorts and hotels

If you want to say you spent the night with a famous friend-to-be, check in to a celebrity-owned hotel like Bono and The Edge's The Clarence in Dublin, Ireland; Abba's Benny Andersson's Hotel Rivalin in Stockholm, Sweden or Elizabeth Hurley's No. 11 Cadogan Gardensin in London, England.

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Black Bean Chilaquile: Heavy on Mexican taste, light on wallet

This recipe serves three to four people. FLICKR: ROOEY202

Ingredients

- 1/2 onion, chopped ($0.44)
- 1 tbsp olive oil ($0.08)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced ($0.10)
- 1/2 cup tomatoes, chopped ($0.23)
- 3/4 cup frozen corn, thawed ($0.11)
- 1 can black beans, drained ($1.29)
- 2 tsp lime juice ($0.12)
- 1 package frozen spinach , thawed and drained well ($1.89)
- 1 tsp each oregano and chili powder ($0.11)
- 2 cups tortilla chips, crushed ($0.79)
- 3 oz cheddar cheese ($1.76)
- 1 cup salsa ($0.60)

Total $7.52 (about $2.50 per 3 people or $1.88 per 4 people)

NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

You know how you love nachos but the calories will kill you? A black bean and veggie heavy casserole gives you the same crispy, cheesy feeling but none of the guilt. This is a great make ahead party dish too. Just stop before the baking step and pop it in the oven for 20 minutes before you want to serve.

1. Sauté onion in oil for 8 minutes until very soft. Stir in garlic, tomatoes, corn, black beans, lime juice, salt and pepper and cook 5 min to heat through. Stir in spinach and heat through; sprinkle in oregano and chili powder.

2. Prepare 8x8 casserole dish or baking pan with light coating of oil. Spread half of the crushed tortilla chips on the bottom. Spoon the sautéed veg over chips. Top with remaining chips and cheese.

3. Heat in 400 F oven to melt cheese. Top with salsa; serve.

Drink of the Week

The Zephyr

Tart and refreshing, this cocktail blends fresh citrus notes for a cool summer treat.

- 1.5 oz Belvedere vodka
- 1/2 oz fresh pink grapefruit juice
- 1/2 oz orgeat syrup
- 1/2 oz fresh lemon juice
- Top tonic water

Shake first four ingredients and strain into highball over fresh ice.

Top with tonic water and garnish with a wedge of fresh pink grapefruit.

RECIPE AND PHOTO COURTESY BELVEDERE VODKA

Eat cheap (and healthy)

For the next three Wednesdays, Metro's Theresa Albert serves up some easy to make and healthy recipes that are perfect for families or starving students.

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MEGHAN GREAVES
TalentEgg.ca

As a student, it's important to be aware of where your tuition money goes. College and university can be expensive, but it's not just the courses you're paying for. There are services that can help the fitness, career, extracurricular and social aspects of your student life. Here are a few things you should use to your advantage while you're still in school:

Student discounts
Between tuition, books and a social life, being a student can mean a strained wallet. Student unions often provide student discounts on a number of activities such as movies, transit tickets, theme parks, sporting events and other special deals so you can go out once in awhile without worrying about spending a fortune.

Tip: Check frequently for different deals. You can visit your student union's website, stop by their office or give them a call to find out more.

Gym membership
For some, the gym is the perfect place to unwind before, after or in between studies. Gym memberships are included in many tuition packages, but students may find themselves "too busy" or claim that the gym "isn't their thing."

Exercise is an important part of keeping the body and mind healthy.

Tip: Get a copy of the exercise schedule. Try different classes by yourself or with a friend and see which ones you like best. Mark an activity or two into your weekly schedule as you would with academic classes.

Health centre
Students spend most of their time at school and may not have time to go to the doctor. That's where the health centre comes in. Health and dental coverage are included in your tuition fees, whether you have a medical plan or not. The health centre usually covers counselling services, nutrition and blood tests.

Tip: You can opt out of health and dental services and receive a refund on the fees. Check with your university for more details.

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Credit requirement checks

- Many students don't realize the importance of keeping track of their credits. Registrar's offices have academic counsellors who specifically look after credit requirements, which determine your graduation.

Tip: Make an appointment with your department's student advisor to go over your credit requirements. One course could determine your fate at graduation. It's always best to be sure.

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PAUL MORRISON PHOTO

THE BEST TIME TO EXPLORE WHISTLER

SEPTEMBER IS SENIORS' MONTH

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September is also seniors' month (65 and older) at Whistler Blackcomb. The cooler temperatures make Whistler an ideal spot for shopping, dining along the village stroll and then heading off for an adventure. Two days for the price of one sightseeing ticket discounts are available for seniors who book 48 hours in advance of their trip to Whistler Blackcomb, and, for the whole month, seniors get 30 per off valley bike rentals at all Whistler Blackcomb stores. Call 1-888-403-4727 or visit whistlerblackcomb.com for more.

It is also the perfect time to experience alpine walking and hiking trails atop Whistler Blackcomb, as well as the record-breaking PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola. Start your day with a delicious cappuccino, then make your way up the Whistler Village Gondola to enjoy one of 16 gorgeous alpine walks or hikes. These true alpine adventures will leave you breathless with incredible views, crystal clear glacial lakes and, if you are lucky, some wildlife.

Cap your day off with a delicious mountain top barbecue Sept. 1 or Sept. 7 at the Roundhouse Lodge. Enjoy mountain top dining at 6,000 feet where you will experience a sizzling barbecue, fresh salads and to-die-for desserts under beautiful blue skies and gorgeous alpine peaks in every direction.

Don't miss out on one of the best months in Whistler with family and friends. For more information, visit whistlerblackcomb.com.

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For a limited time, get two days of sightseeing on the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola for the price of a one-day ticket. Seniors rate is $39.95. The PEAK 2 PEAK Alpine Experience Lift ticket includes access to the alpine via the Whistler Village Gondola (Whistler base) or Wizard Express-Solar Coaster Express (Blackcomb base), and unlimited rides on the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola and the Peak Chair.

4 SPORTS

Baseball

Canadians move ahead of Indians

The Vancouver Canadians enter the final six games of the regular season clinging to a playoff spot.

The Canadians took two of three games against the Spokane Indians in a pivotal series that concluded Monday with a 3-1 victory for Vancouver at Scotiabank Field at Nat Bailey Stadium.

Up next is a three-game series with the Tri-City Dust Devils, beginning Wednesday at The Nat.

In the overall standings, the Canadians lead the Indians by one game for the final playoff spot in the Northwest League North Division. Both teams have six games remaining.

The Everett AquaSox won the first half of the season and have clinched a playoff berth. Everett leads Vancouver and Spokane in the second-half standings as well. Should the Aquasox hold on to win the second half, and the Canadians stay ahead of the Indians in the overall standings, then the Canadians would qualify for the playoffs. METRO

U.S. Open

Pospisil suffers first-round loss

Vasek Pospisil of Vernon was left fuming Tuesday after a tough 4-6, 3-6, 7-6 (9), 6-2, 7-6 (10) loss to Brazilian qualifier Rogerio Dutra in the opening round of the U.S. Open.

With the fifth-set tiebreaker tied 10-10, the umpire overruled a linesperson's call on Dutra's shot that was initially ruled long. That gave Dutra match point, which he then converted. THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Whitecaps' Jordan Harvey is tripped by Sean Franklin of the Galaxy at BC Place Stadium last Saturday. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

No room for error in the wild West

MLS. Whitecaps were second in conference just two games ago, and now they're seventh as they face Chivas USA

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

In just two games, the Vancouver Whitecaps went from an outside contender for first place in Major League Soccer's Western Conference to the outside of the playoff picture looking in.

It's evidence of how quickly a club can descend through the standings in the tightly packed West.

The Whitecaps were sitting in second place, but consecutive shutout losses to the Colorado Rapids and L.A. Galaxy have dropped them to seventh.

Only the top-five teams qualify for the MLS Cup playoffs.

"You see the way the league is," said Scottish striker Kenny Miller following Tuesday's training session at UBC. "It's so tight."

Up next for the Whitecaps are Chivas USA, the bottom dwellers of the West, at BC Place Stadium on Sunday.

Far from Guaranteed Win Night, but consider that Chivas has only five victories in 25 games to date, and one win in 12 road games.

Conversely, the Whitecaps are 8-2-3 at home.

They'll be without Nigel Reo-Coker at attacking midfield, as he serves a one-game suspension for yellow-card accumulation.

They should also get striker Camilo Sanvezzo, tied for second in MLS with 14 goals, back from a minor groin strain that kept him out of action against the Galaxy on Saturday.

But consider what faces the Whitecaps after Sunday, and it's apparent they need to take the maximum three points from Chivas.

Following that match, the Whitecaps will play five of their remaining eight games on the road.

Vancouver is 2-7-3 away from their often-referred fortress of BC Place.

Of those five road games, only one is against a team currently below the Whitecaps in the standings, be it in the West or the Supporters' Shield Race, as in the case with the Montreal Impact.

"Really, it's just about us," said defender Jordan Harvey.

"We need to play with confidence and finish our opportunities."

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DRIVE 5

The 2013 Nissan Leaf

ALL PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Review. Norway shows the way environmentally as Leafs continue to fly off the shelves

The 2013 Nissan Leaf

- **Type.** Four-door
- **Engines (hp).** 80 kW electric motor (109PS of power)
- **Range for one charge.** 199km
- **Emissions.** 0g/km
- **Base price (incl. destination)** $31,698 to $38,398 depending on the package

Interior

Now available in more conventional black trim instead of beige, the interior is familiar yet futuristic; a clever mix of comfort with cool blue accents and icons to remind you you're a trendsetter.

Performance

Zippy, comfortable and quiet, this kind of progress feels efficient and fun. The new Leaf feels faster than its 0 to 100 km/h time of 11.5 seconds suggests.

Design

The refinements are subtle, so the styling remains divisive and is not to everyone's taste. In other words, it's kind of funny looking.

They're clever people, the Norwegians. In Norway electric cars are flying off the shelves. Why? Because in Norway there is no sales tax or road tax to pay on EVs and in cities, including Oslo, parking and charging — via a comprehensive citywide infrastructure — is free.

Best of all you can drive in the bus lanes, improving commuting times significantly. Consequently Nissan's electric Leaf has been selling very well there.

Helped by its conventional packaging, the compromises of Leaf ownership are very few. Which is why we were testing the new Leaf in Norway, because the Leaf and the city of Oslo represent one vision of an automobile future for all of us.

This 2013 Leaf model has been improved by increasing power and range and by moving the plug-in charging unit to the front of the car, increasing boot space by 40 litres.

The car is also lighter and has improved ride thanks to a retuned chassis tweaked for European tastes. The result is that this electric car has become more comfortable, practical and fun. In fact it's more conventionally car-like, which can only be a good thing.

Inside the Nissan Leaf you'll find five seats, five doors, and plenty of smart storage throughout. Plus all the high tech gadgets you would expect from a car this innovative, like Bluetooth connectivity, Nissan intelligent key with push button start, and a USB connection port for iPods and other compatible devices.

• Biggest plus

Knowing you will rarely have to deal with gas stations. Or pay for fuel for that matter. The charging speed has been halved too.

•Biggest flaw

The steering doesn't feel fantastically responsive at speed, though around town this translates into below-average manoeuvrability.

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
As Mars moves into the dynamic sign of Leo today, your energy and confidence will surge. Yes, all things are possible but that does not mean you have to try to do it all at the same time.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You should make an effort to convince loved ones that you are still on their side. Why might they doubt you? Because you have been strangely uncommunicative of late.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Don't stop to analyze your motives: act while the passion is hot. One bold move could be all it takes today to start the ball rolling in your favour again.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
There are major opportunities heading your way but are you in the right frame of mind to take advantage of them? Take an hour out of your busy schedule today to get your head back in the right place.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
The world needs people who are willing to take a risk and with Mars moving into your sign today, it's you. Don't wait to be told to do what you feel is right — self-belief is all the permission you need.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Although the Sun and Mercury are boosting your confidence in a big way, other influences suggest you may have to be on your guard for secret enemies over the next few days. You can't be too careful.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Others may be raving about a new fad but you have your doubts it is as good as they think it is. Don't be afraid to take an opposing view. Your judgment is sound.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You seem even more ambitious than usual now and you will certainly not be inclined to settle for second best. You may have to fight it out with an equally ambitious rival but it will be a one-sided battle.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
The next few days will see a big change in the way you look at an event. You will begin to realize that you have only part of the story and the missing parts are of huge significance.

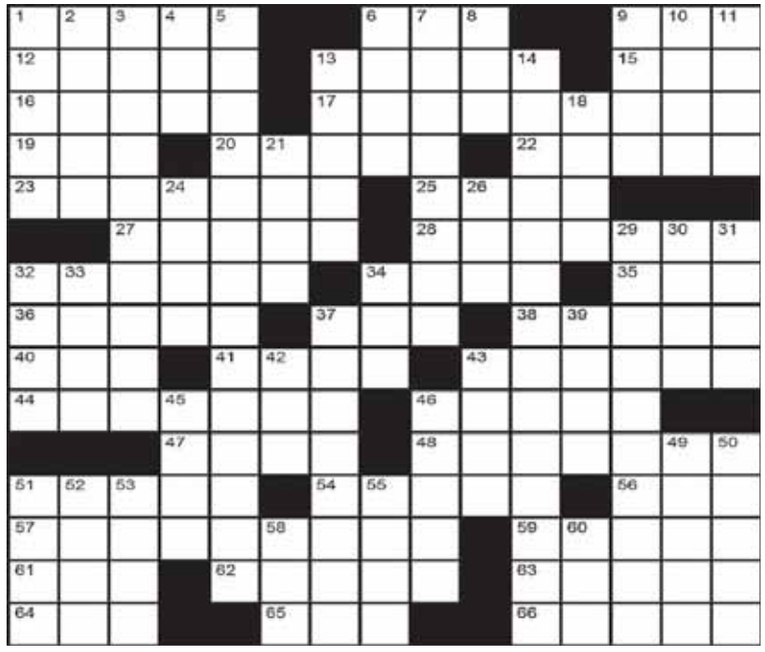
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
It may seem as if you are out of touch with the feelings of those around you but that's OK. You are who you are and don't have to act in ways that don't come naturally to you.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You are in the middle of a creative phase and anything of an artistic nature will go well for you over the next few days. This is an especially good time to learn a new skill. What do you dream of doing?

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Tough decisions must be made and you must expect some people to be less than happy with what you decide. That's too bad. If they had acted sooner, it would not be down to you to put things right. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

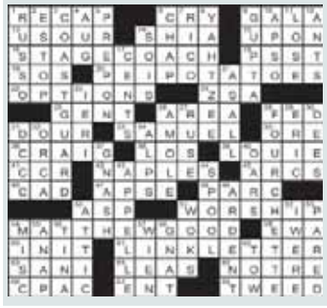
See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Weightlifter's pride
6. US speed meas.
9. Mr. Tolkien
12. Originated
13. 1988 Summer Olympics locale
15. Farm song vowels
16. Sub instrument
17. Turntable artists, e.g.: 2 wds.
19. Bill [abbr.]
20. Menu clickees
22. Leaf's lines
23. Derelict building, perhaps
25. Froster
27. Connecting points
28. '60s song: "__ and Clover"
32. Detect
34. Move like a hummingbird
35. Green Day drummer, __ Cool
36. Corn chip bag's one-of-some
37. Actress Charlotte
38. Nancy of "Entertainment Tonight"
40. Virgo's predecessor
41. Storage space
43. Fawn
44. Gave to charity
46. Birth a bovine
47. Enthusiastic, __ ho
48. Finds one's positioning
51. Cook, this way
54. Larks about
56. Small photograph
57. National symbol: 2 wds.
59. Laura Branigan hit that goes "God how I love you so.": 2 wds.
61. Paranormal power, briefly
62. Fatty, as some meat
63. Metal bar
64. 'Govern' suffix (Jane Eyre's job)
65. Outs opposites
66. Wedding cake layers

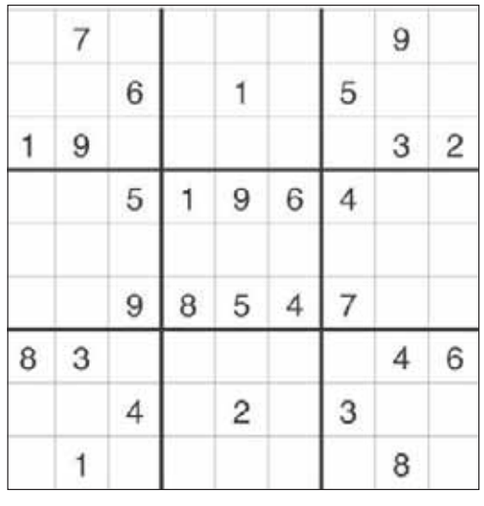
Down
1. Jazz great, Count __ (b.1904 - d.1984)
2. Tale's twist
3. Metro Toronto __ Centre
4. Conductor, __-Pekka Salonen
5. Historical reenactment garbs: 2 wds.
6. Chow __
7. Freezie alternative
8. "I dunno?"
9. "Return of the __" (1983)
10. Dutch artist, Rembrandt van __
11. Supreme singer Diana
13. Some footwear
14. 1) Stay-after-the-reno 2) Sell-and-go ...choices for homeowners on this Canadian series: 5 wds.
18. Salon style, shortly
21. First Nation of Manitoba
24. And __ goes (Thusly): 2 wds.
26. Heartfelt protest, __ de coeur
29. Ed Robertson's co-songwriter on many hits: 2 wds.
30. Heraldic wreath
31. Foster flick
32. St. John's locale, for short
33. Common crossword cookie
34. Trend
37. Handyman character played by Canadian comedian Steve Smith: 2 wds.
39. Peace bird
42. Egg layer
43. "The World According to __" (1982)
45. "Tutti Frutti" bit: Got _ ___ named Daisy..."
46. Snug
49. Indian Ocean arm, __ Sea
50. Mary, Queen of __
51. Captain Hook's sidekick
52. Itar-__ (Russian news agency)
53. Actor, Omar __
55. Feedbag bits
58. Him, in Paris
60. Pasta names suffix

Yesterday's Crossword

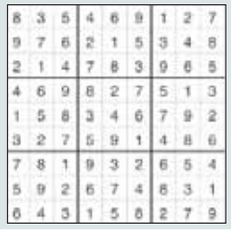


Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



Yesterday's Sudoku



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Crystal Mall
Lougheed Town Centre
Metropolis at Metrotown
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Cottonwood Mall
Eagle Landing Shopping Centre
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Coquitlam
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